

Thoughts on Managing a Synchronous + Zoom Class

Shared by Paul Blowers, Distinguished Professor, Chemical and Environmental Engineering

- Instructors should acknowledge both the students in the class and those who are remote before, during, and after class. Don't just focus on the ones in the classroom, but intentionally include everyone at all points
- For Teaching Assistants, Learning Assistants, and preceptors who attend via Zoom, ask them to edit their names to include their role; e.g., TA, LA, or Preceptor.
- For inclusivity, I'm going to edit my name to include "(he, him, his)" and will encourage students to do the same.
- Dedicate a TA, LA, or preceptor, or co-instructor, to monitor the chat and respond if I cannot respond or am distracted by teaching the class.
- Use the chat to share resources as files that students might need. (That worked well in the spring semester.)
- Encourage students to use the chat for equality and efficiency purposes.
- Make it as easy as possible for students to rejoin if their connection goes bad. Have the Zoom link in the D2L calendar and other easy to find places; maybe a dedicated link to the Zoom meeting in the tool bar if there is room so students aren't clicking around trying to find it. (Zoom was pretty robust and not many people were kicked out during classes in the spring.)
- Use Zoom and/or clickers to check in often with all students for formative assessment and checking on pacing. (That worked really well in spring, even when I didn't have a formal poll.)
- Instructors should always restate every student question and comment that is asked or made by students in the class. (Too often in my class observations, I will be in a room (pre-pandemic) and a student at the far end of the room without a mic says, "garble whizzle bang stuff" and then the instructor with the microphone responds, "Exactly! That is so critical and if you don't know that, you're going to fail the exam." This is now just exacerbated.)